

4. COMMUNITY GOALS

The Community Goals Section consists of General Concerns, each a broad-issue area requiring attention in developing long-range planning strategies. Within each General Concern, the Master Plan Committee examined and evaluated a variety of specific programs, regulations, and services administered by the municipality. The Master Plan Committee then defined Goals specifically related to addressing each area of concern. Finally, a number of Objectives were developed to provide a framework for achieving the Goals. These goals are the foundation of our future planning efforts.

GENERAL CONCERN: DIVERSE DEVELOPMENT

We need to provide for diverse development while maintaining the rural quality of the town.

GOAL

Diversify and expand Newton's development base such that it does not adversely affect the quality of life.

Objectives

- Maintain an inventory of available, developable sites and an evaluation of their suitability for various uses.
- Develop regulations and/or procedures for Planning Board applications that involve hazardous materials and potential pollution sources.
- Implement land use regulations that ensure residential areas are protected from incompatible uses of adjoining land areas.

GOAL

Develop a coherent and contained professional/commercial development in order to maintain the majority of the town as rural residential while increasing the diversity of the tax base..

Objectives

- Develop a plan to avoid strip developments .
- Develop strategies specifically aimed at expanding existing businesses and attracting desired commercial enterprises.
- Explore feasibility and possible sites for private senior residential facilities and/or retirement communities . Develop zoning and other regulations that would encourage such development.
- Investigate alternative strategies to ensure future development takes place in a manner consistent with town character.
- Explore feasibility and possible sites for low impact private recreation.

GENERAL CONCERN: NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION

We need to protect vital natural resources and increase recreational opportunities for town residents.

GOAL

Develop a coordinated approach to recreational facilities to serve all age groups of the community.

Objectives

- Identify and set priorities for needed recreational facilities.
- Locate sports playing fields and other local parks to serve residential neighborhoods .
- Maintain and enhance public access to local ponds and other areas of interest.
- Identify and formulate a policy to preserve a trail system. This might include conservation easements on private land in exchange for tax abatement.
- Require the inclusion of recreational needs in subdivision plans when submitted to the Planning Board.

GOAL

Encourage the preservation and enhancement of the town's cultural and historic resources.

Objectives

- Conduct historical resources survey to determine structures and places of historic and architectural value.
- Ensure cultural and historic resources do not suffer due to rapid growth.

GOAL

Protect valuable natural areas from encroachment.

Objectives

- Identify natural areas and resources that should be protected including the uplands to wetland and wildlife corridors .
- Promote zoning that ensures compatibility of adjacent land uses.
- Establish conservation areas to protect unique natural resource areas.
- Encourage acceptance of gifts to the town of land, buildings, easements and rights-of-way for the preservation of open space and land conservation.

GOAL

Protect water resources and areas affecting Newton's water supply.

Objectives

- Identify water supply sources including aquifers.
- Establish conservation areas to protect water resources.
- Implement aquifer protection ordinance.

GENERAL CONCERN: GROWTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Due to the rapid growth of southeastern Rockingham County, Newton residents are concerned about maintaining the rural character and appearance of Newton while, at the same time, ensuring orderly economic growth without overburdening municipal facilities. Many residents support controlled growth. Growth control must, however, be based upon the ability of the town to provide service to its residents. As a consequence, limitations must be based on such factors as school capacity and roadway adequacy, with the recognition that it is Newton's responsibility to provide such services to its residents.

GOAL

Provide for orderly population growth consistent with the town's ability to provide increased services and facilities .

Objectives

- Develop town regulations that deal with density, preservation of natural features and other amenity considerations.
- Develop and implement a Capital Improvements Program for large capital expenditures in order to stabilize year-to-year variations in the tax rate.
- Continue coordination with the Sanborn Regional School District for provision of an adequate number of classrooms and related facilities to serve all students in accordance with State school standards.
- Identify and acquire land needed for municipal and school development.
- Develop and maintain a plan for an efficient and safe roadway network
- Require traffic impact analysis for large developments and require developers to pay their fair share of roadway improvements.

GOAL

Ensure continued and adequate municipal services to town residents.

Objectives

- Provide satisfactory level of service and water supply for fire protection.
- Identify factors and levels of residential density that will require the town to develop municipal water/sewer so that the town can plan for this.

- Provide adequate accommodation for governmental and other official activities based on anticipated growth and development patterns.
- Study feasibility of developing a town center.